

National Park Service “Organic Act”

"There is created in the Department of the Interior a service to be called the National Park Service, which shall be under the charge of a director....The service thus established shall promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations hereinafter specified, except as are under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Army, as provided by law, by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment for the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

Signed by
President Woodrow Wilson
August 25, 1916

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U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Park Centennial Initiative:
America’s Listening Sessions

Public and partners asked to help craft vision for the next century

A message from
Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne

Welcome. I want to thank you for taking the time to learn about the National Park Centennial Initiative



Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne

and to share with us your vision for the future of our national parks. The 100th anniversary of the National Park Service isn’t until August 25, 2016, but there is much work ahead to prepare for a centennial celebration.

President Bush, on the 90th anniversary of the National Park Service, directed me to “invite and receive suggestions from those who desire to

preserve the scenic, cultural, historical, geological and recreational values of our national parks.”

Listening sessions provide the ideal venue to accomplish this purpose.

The results of tonight’s listening session and additional comments we receive online or through the mail in the next few weeks are important to the future of our nationwide system of national parks, monuments, trails and memorials. By taking part, you will help guide staff at the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service in making decisions about the shape and structure of the Centennial Initiative.

National parks preserve majestic natural wonders. They keep watch over hallowed battlefields. They

keep culture alive at sites dedicated to the performing arts, poetry and music. Parks offer recreation and discovery through spectacular backcountry hiking and climbing. They honor great leaders like Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Chief Joseph, John Muir, Eleanor Roosevelt and Martin Luther King, Jr. As havens of enjoyment, recreation, learning and personal renewal, national parks must endure.

In his message last August, the President wrote: “Americans take great pride in our country’s natural and historic treasures, and the National Park Service plays an important role in ensuring our rich heritage is preserved and enjoyed for generations to come.”

National Park Service Director Mary Bomar, British-born and American by choice, told me that back in 1912, British Ambassador James Bryce called our parks “the best idea America ever had.” Ambassador Bryce understood the power our national parks have to unite Americans. Billions of visitors have come to the same conclusion.



NPS Director Mary A. Bomar

“I call on all Americans to help in these efforts and to enhance our parks as we get ready for the National Park Service’s centennial celebration.”

President George W. Bush

President Bush asked Secretary Kempthorne and Director Bomar to listen to comments from people, and our partners, who care about our national parks.

What are the signature projects and programs that you think should be highlighted for completion over the next 10 years?

Signature projects can include anything from restoring historic structures and landscapes, renovating museums and visitor centers, integrating emerging technologies, improving trails and recreational opportunities, to connecting children to their national parks.

- Continue the National Park Service's legacy of leveraging philanthropic, partnership and government investments to benefit national parks and their visitors;
- Capture the imagination of the public;
- Provide a margin of excellence;
- Secure at least a 1:1 philanthropic match;
- Use current staffing unless staff is provided through endowed positions or partners;
- Be sustainable in design, material and location.

**For Centennial Initiative
information or to comment
online please visit us at
www.nps.gov/2016**

I'd like to take part in the Centennial Initiative and planning for the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. Based on the discussion questions provided, here are my comments about the future of America's national parks.

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